For the Revd Mr John Hamilton

Mr. *Prince's*
SERMON
ON
The DESTRUCTION of
The *GRAVE*

BRITISH MUSEUM

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The GRAVE *and* DEATH *Deſtroyed, and Believers Ranſomed and Redeemed from them*

A

SERMON

AT

MIDLEBOROUGH Eaſt-Precinct

July. VII. 1728.

Being the *Lord's-Day* after

THE

Deceaſe & Funeral

OF

Samuel Prince, Eſq;

THERE.

By THOMAS PRINCE, *M. A.*
a Paſtor of the South Church in BOSTON,
and One of the Sons of the Deceaſed.

Iſa. lxvi. 14. *And when ye ſee this, your Heart ſhall rejoice, and your Bones ſhall flouriſh like an Herb* &c

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BRITISH MUSEUM

The Grave deſtroyed, And *Believers ranſomed.*

HOSEA XIII. 14.

I will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave: I will redeem them from Death: O Death, I will be thy Plagues! O Grave, I will be thy Deſtruction! Repentance ſhall be hid from mine Eyes.

HAVING lately ſeen the Bodies both of a pious *Father* & *Son* ‖ lying under the Power of the Grave & Death together, and within the view of this Houſe; what a ſpring of Conſolation are the words before us, both with reſpect to them and others who have deceaſed in the Faith and are lying in their Graves about them? *I will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death,* &c.

‖ SAMUEL PRINCE, Eſq; who died July 3. 1728. Æt. 80. And Mr. ENOCH PRINCE, who died Aug. 31. 1713. Æt. 23. Both buried in the ſame Grave.

But who is this that undertakes this mighty Work?

By the 4th, 5th, 9th & 10th Verſes of this Chapter, compared with other Scriptures, it ſeems very plain, that the Perſon here ſpeaking is no other than He who ſince is called Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour. For there we read, ---*Yet I am the Lord thy God from the Land of Egypt, and thou ſhalt know no God but me; for there is no Saviour beſides me: I did know Thee in the Wilderneſs, in the Land of great Drought,--- O Iſrael thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in me is thine Help: I will be thy King: where is any other that may ſave Thee?* &c. Characters eſpecially that of a Saviour, that are expreſly aſcrib'd to Christ, excluſive of others, in the clearer Revelations of the Goſpel. And if we diligently ſearch the Scriptures *; we ſhall find Him ſometimes aſſuming the Appearance and Denomination of a *Man*, and ſometimes of an *Angel*, long before He became incarnate, and under each of theſe aſſerting his ſupream Perfections and his diſtinguiſhing Offices for his Covenant People.

But to ſhow preciſely that Christ is the *great Redeemer* here ſpeaking; I need only mention thoſe illuſtrative Paſſages in Heb. II. 9, 10, 14. and 2 Tim. I. 10. For in the *former* of thoſe Places, He is expreſly called, *The Captain of their Salvation*, and the Deſtruction of him that has the Power of Death, and the Deliverance of his People from the Fear and Bondage of it, are preciſely attributed to Him: and in the *latter*, He is ſaid to have *aboliſh'd Death*, as well as to have *brought Life & Immortality to Light by the Goſpel.*

It is then the Almighty Son of God, that here ſays, --- *I will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave*, &c.

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* *Gen.* XVI, XVIII, XXI, XXXI, XXXII, XLVIII. *Exod.* III, XIX, XX. *Judges* VI. *Iſa.* LXIII. 9. *Mal.* III. *Acts* VII. 38. *Gal.* III. 19, &c.

And

And it is very obſervable that in the Parts of the Chapter which both go before and follow our Text, He is full of dark Predictions of the Temporal Deſtruction of the Tribes of *Iſrael*: But as if He were weary with the affecting View, or at leaſt would give a glimmer of Light to ſupport and comfort the pious Souls among them; He ſeems here on a ſudden to riſe into a tender Reſentment of their deplorable Bondage under the Power of Death and the Grave, and into a fixed Reſolution to deliver his People and deſtroy thoſe their devouring Enemies. *I will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave*, &c.

To ſhow his righteous and holy Diſpleaſure at the Sin of his People, He firſt permits the Grave & Death to get them into their terrible Power & Captivity: But when He comes to ſee how cruel are theſe remorſeleſs Enemies, and the extream Deſtruction they have bro't his People to; He is fired with an holy Indignation againſt theſe Deſtroyers, He is reſolv'd to be avenged on them, and to reſcue the Prey out of their Mouths.

It is as if He had ſaid, "I am reſolved to ranſom "them from the Power of the Grave: I am reſolv'd "to redeem them from the Jaws of Death: *O Death!* "Thou haſt been a Plague to my People; I will "be a mortal Plague to Thee: *O Grave!* Thou "haſt been their cruel Deſtroyer; I will be thy "utter Deſtruction: Thou haſt had no Relenting "or Pity on them, and I will have no Pity on Thee, "but Repentance ſhall be hid from mine Eyes for "ever.

What a glorious Friend and Redeemer is this --- *Awake & Sing ye that dwell in the Duſt: For thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth ſhall caſt out the Dead*, as it does the Plants that ſeem to be periſhed in Her. † *i.e.* The Power of Christ upon you, like the nightly Dew, ſhall gently revive and refreſh your languiſh'd Bodies, and in the Morning make you to riſe out of the Earth & flouriſh.

† *Iſa.* XXVI. 19.

But

But our Obſervations from the Words are theſe,

1. That the *Grave* and *Death* have a dreadful and deſtroying *Power*, even over thoſe that are dear to Christ or are his Covenant People.
2. That this Almighty Saviour beholds his People under this dreadful Power, with a moſt tender *Pity* for them; and an holy *Indignation* at thoſe devouring Enemies.
3. & laſtly, That in this active Pity and Indignation, He is inflexibly reſolv'd to *Ranſom* and *Redeem* his People from their Power, & to *Deſtroy* thoſe Enemies of theirs for ever.

Obs. I. *THAT the* Grave *and* Death *have a dreadful and deſtroying* Power, *even over thoſe that are dear to CHRIST or are his Covenant People.*

That they have ſuch a Power over impenitent and *graceleſs Sinners*, is no wonder. They not only deſerve it and are under the Sentence of Condemnation to it; but they are alſo conſtantly provoking the moſt High God to abandon them thereto. But that the *ſanctified* and pardoned, in whom the Image of Christ is formed, in whom He dwells & reigns, and who are dearly beloved of Him; that Death and the Grave ſhould have ſuch a Power over *theſe*, and there ſhould be no apparent Difference between them and others, ſeems ſomewhat ſtrange & myſterious to us.

To illuſtrate this I ſhall therefore ſhow you theſe Two Things,

1. Something of the dreadful and deſtroying Power of the Grave and Death over true Believers. And,
2. How come they to have ſuch a Power over them.

I. *SOMETHING of the dreadful & deſtroying Power of the Grave and Death, and the lamentable State of Believers under them.*

And

AND here, tho' the Power of the *Grave* be mentioned firſt, yet inaſmuch as *Death* is the firſt that ſeizes and leads them Captive, we will firſt conſider *this* in its dreadful Power, and then the *Grave* to which it carries them as into a doleful Priſon, from whence there is no Deliverance but by an Almighty Hand.

1. *THE dreadful and deſtroying Power of* DEATH.

AND how extreamly terrible would this Enemy appear, if we were to ſurvey this lower World, and either reflect on all its Cruelties thro' the Ages paſt, or could take a view of the numberleſs Deſtructions it is even now a making among the Sons of Men.

IN how many places is it without any Mercy ſeizing and deſtroying the tender *Infants*, even before the Birth: it allows them never to ſee the Light, and even turns the Wombs that quickned them into Graves to conſume them.

IN how many places is it ſnatching the pleaſant *Offspring* from the Mother's Breaſts, and from the Fathers Arms, and bearing it away from their Sight for ever.

IN how many places is it ſeizing the lovely *Child*, while it ſhrieks for help, and neither the Parents Tears, nor the Phyſicians Skill can ſave it from the mercileſs Devourer.

IN how many places is it ſtopping the Sprightly *Youth* in his joyous and ſwift Career, and cutting off both his blooming Life and Hopes together.

IN how many places is it utterly parting the deareſt *Friends*: in how many, rending from the Husband the *Deſire of his Eyes*, and from the Wife her cheif *Delight and Guardian*.

How many anxious *Parents* are forc'd to leave their poor ſhiftleſs Children crying out after them. The Aged bereft of their *Sons and Daughters*, the Supports and Hopes of their declining Years: and others whoſe *venerable Aſpect* & *Piety* & *Affection* for their Children, render them moſt dear and deſire-

able, must be made to groan under heavy Burthens, and at last to part from their mournful Families, and remove into Darkness. Their Eyes that have seen them shall see them no more; and the Places that knew them shall know them no more!

In short, this cruel and irresistible Enemy neither spares the Old nor Young, nor the Rich nor Poor, nor the High nor Low, nor the Bond nor Free. Nor can the Comely, nor the Strong, nor the Wise, resist his destructive Power: nor will he spare the Guilty that most earnestly desires an Hour for Repentance, nor yet the Good that wou'd have an Age to serve the World. No Objects, Accomplishments, Devices, Skill or Prayers can avail to save them.

And for the cruel *Methods* of his destroying the Sons of Men --- they are too many and various now to think of. I shall only mention a few Particulars.

On some He lays his iron Hands, and racks them in their tender Joints and Sinews, till their Souls and Bodies are forc'd asunder. In some He kindles an hot glowing Fire that quickly parches and burns up the Life. Some He brings and keeps in great Distress for want of necessary Length of Breathing, till they can bare no longer, their Strength & Spirits fail, and their Breath expires. Some He on a sudden pierces with gashfull Wounds and intollerable Torments: some He kills as quick as Lightning: some He Strangles, and some He Crushes all to pieces.

In such various Methods does this Cruel Enemy express his dreadful Rage and Violence among the Sons of Men.

But let us now behold this King of Terrors as He *usually comes on* with his gastly Looks and destroying Power.

And here He often first begins to blast their Strength, and then to oppress and pain their Hearts. He makes them restless Day and Night. He drinks up their Spirits, and works like Poyson, like the Gall of Asps within them. He throws their inward parts and

and Juices into great Diſorders: and as He comes on nearer, He binds and chains the vital Powers, He fills the Windows of the Eyes with Darkneſs, He makes the Throat to ſound with a diſmal Rattle, the outward Parts to chill and ſtiffen; and the Face that us'd to bloom and ſmile, He makes to look with Diſtreſs and Horror.

AND now come on the doleful Groans, the dying Throws and Struggles, the fainting Gaſps for a few Breaths more --- the Strength is gone, the Life expires, the Soul is vaniſh'd, the Jaws fall down, the Countenance turns wan and horrid; the Corpſe becomes as cold as Clay, it quickly runs to Putrefaction; and by caſting out inſufferable Smells, it forces us to bury it in the midſt of Grief and Lamentations.

THIS is ſomething of the Power of *Death*. We proceed now

2. *TO conſider ſomething of the dreadful and deſtroying Power of* THE GRAVE, *and the lamentable State of Believers under it.*

AND here we muſt leave their *Souls* that are become inviſible to mortal Eyes, and only view their lifeleſs *Bodies* as they lie in that gloomy Cavern.

THERE they are covered up with Earth, and as *Job* expreſſes it, their Beds are made in Darkneſs ‡. There they are forever hid from the Sight and Converſe of the Living. The devouring Worms may ſwarm and feed upon them. Their Skin grows mouldy and black as a Coal. Their Fleſh conſumes and putrifies; and as it waſts away, it changes into a muddy Subſtance, and Rotteneſs enters into all their Bones.

AND Oh! how hideous is now the Sight of that which was once a lovely and delightful Body! The Linnen that bound the Parts for a while together, is turn'd to dirt of the darkeſt Hue, and the Joints diſſolved. The Bones lie bare and black --- the Eye-

‡ Job XVII. 13.

balls, the Cheeks, the Lips are eaten out, the Jaws wide open, the Teeth appearing laſt, and the mouldering Ribs will let you ſee that the Heart & Reins are conſumed within them.

THIS is ſomething of the deſtroying *Power of the Grave*, and the lamentable State of the Bodies of Believers under it: and how affecting is it that they muſt be there confin'd as in a doleful Dungeon full of Dead Men's Bones and all Uncleanneſs, as CHRIST diſcribes it ||, and even there muſt lie till they are turn'd to Rotteneſs and filthy Earth.

AND thus we ſee Believers, tho' they are ever ſo dear to CHRIST, yet in theſe reſpects if we look no further, there is no Deſtinction between them and others, and even the vileſt of the Sons of Men; and indeed often their very Bones and Duſt are mix'd together.

LET us therefore now conſider

II. *HOW comes this to paſs that Death and the Grave have ſuch a dreadful Power over them.*

To this I muſt but anſwer briefly; that we may get out as ſoon as poſſible, of theſe Sorrowful Contemplations.

Now it is by *their Original Sin and Fall* in their firſt Parents, that theſe dreadful Enemies have thus gotten them into their Power. And tho' CHRIST has purchaſed them a compleat Redemption from every Evil; yet He is pleaſed for wiſe Intentions to apply the Purchaſe and redeem them *by Degrees*, till He brings the Work to its deſign'd Perfection.

FIRST He reſcues them from the moral Dominion of Sin and Satan at the very Inſtant of their true Converſion. He then delivers them more and more from their prevailing influence, as they are marching on to the Heavenly Places. At the Moment of Death, He compleatly redeems the Soul from Sin & Sorrow, and puts an utter End to the Polution and Influence

|| Mat. XXIII. 27.

of

of Sin in their Bodies. And then He ſuffers the Power of Death and the Grave to prevail, that He might bare his Witneſs againſt the Sin of his People, and that his almighty Power may the more appear and ſhine, in raiſing their diſſolved Duſt to Life, and forming ſo vile a Subſtance into Glorious Bodies.

But in theſe dark and melancholly Scenes it is now time to come to our

II. Obs. *THAT this* Almighty Saviour *beholds his People under this dreadful Power of the Grave and Death with a moſt tender* Pity *for them, and an high* Resentment *againſt thoſe their Enemies.*

These mouldering, vile & deſtroyed Bodies were once inlivened with rational, active and immortal Souls. Yea they once were ſanctified together by the Holy Spirit, and became his Temples. In them He condeſcended to reſide, and there He dwelt and wrought with Pleaſure. In them He gave a deadly Blow to Sin, and made an hopeful Progreſs in their ſpiritual Life & Purification. He employ'd them as active Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs to God, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks,* and of great Good and Comfort among the Children of Men. In them He ſhow'd his moſt excellent Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Power and Workmanſhip, with the alluring Beauties of Religion. And on them He began to mark the Lines of the Image of Christ.

With theſe Bodies of theirs as well as with their Souls combined, the Son of God has entred into a ſacred *Covenant of Union*, much like that of Marriage between a Wife & Husband; but in this it differs, that even Death it ſelf ſhall never diſſolve it. In them He us'd to have an holy and delightful Fellowſhip, for them He died and roſe again, and for them He therefore bares a conſtant and moſt dear Affection.

In ſhort, He made them the precious Members of his myſtical Body; and how often have they wro't

* Rom. VI. 13.

and

and ſuffered and ſpent their Strength and Eaſe in his laborious Service? How much have their Eyes been exerciſed in Reading his holy Oracles, and ſurveying his wonderous Works; their Feet in Traveling to his worſhipping Aſſemblies; their Ears in Hearkning to his holy Word; their vocal Organs in ſpeaking forth his Praiſes; and their Hands and Arms in a vaſt variety of Actions for his Intereſt and Honour? How often have their Hearts been oppreſs'd with Grief for the Sins of others & themſelves againſt Him, their tender Nerves fatigued and pained, and their Lives conſumed in Sufferings and Labours for Him.

Yea, When they gave up the Ghoſt, they gave it in the Exerciſe of Love to Christ, of Deſires to be with Him, and reſigned both their Souls and Bodies into his Almighty Hands, into his tender Care and Keeping: Hoping that He would not always leave their *Souls* in the State of Separation, nor let their *Bodies* always ſee Corruption; but that He wou'd kindly watch their mouldering Earth, and not deſpiſe their broken Image, but in the Morning which ſhall riſe with his Appearance, that He wou'd then remember and reſtore their deſtroyed Bodies, quicken them with their returning Spirits, make them of an Immortal Conſtitution, raiſe them from the Dungeon of the Grave, and bring them forth to Light and Liberty; that in their Fleſh and with thoſe longing Eyes they might ſee Him on the Earth.

And now the Death of theſe muſt needs, as the *Pſalmiſt* tells us †, be very *Precious in his ſight*, i.e. In their very Death and Diſſolution they are dear and precious to Him. In all their Afflictions, and eſpecially the moſt ſharp Affliction of this diſtreſſing Hour, He muſt needs, as much as is conſiſtent with his happy State in Heaven be afflicted alſo. He has a Fellow feeling with them in theſe bitter Sufferings which He once felt Himſelf when He lived & dyed

† Pſal CXVI. 15.

among

among us ‡. And if it were conſiſtent with his FATHER's Will, CHRIST would never ſuffer Death to hurt or touch them, and much leſs to ſeparate thoſe dear Companions their Souls and Bodies, and bring their Bodies into ſuch a waſt and lamentable State.

CHRIST muſt needs behold the ſtrugling Conteſt with great Concern. And when the *vile Body* is bereſt of Life and Soul, He does not leave it: When 'tis carried to the Grave, He goes down with it Thither: His gracious Preſence dwells with it there: and there He tenderly watches over it, that not a Duſt may be loſt that may be a convenient material to be put into the Building again. While the Carcaſe lies putrifying, in all it's Noiſomeneſs and Blackneſs, He does by no means deſpiſe it; but He Pities it, and accounts the Duſt of his Temples to be precious while it lies in Deſtruction and Ruins.

AND from *Pitying* the broken Remains of his People under the cruel and inglorious Power of Death and the Grave, He highly *Reſents* the Injuries thoſe devouring Enemies have done them, and the baſe Condition they have brought his beloved People into. *Their Souls* in Paradice have alſo a longing Deſire for their deſtroyed Bodies: And they continually *Cry* with *thoſe under the Altar*, ‖ to THIS MIGHTY REDEEMER, to reſcue them from the Power of theſe inveterate and vile Enemies and take Vengeance on them. And with the Sight of the deplorable Condition of their Bodies in the Grave, and the earneſt Cry of their ſeparate Spirits, HE cannot but be mov'd with an high Indignation againſt theſe their cruel & remorſeleſs Deſtroyers.

AND this brings us to the

III: and laſt OBS. viz. *THAT with this active Pity & Indignation, He is inflexibly reſolv'd to* RANSOM, *and* REDEEM *his People from their Power, and to* DESTROY *thoſe Enemies of theirs for ever.*

‡ *Heb.* IV. 15. ‖ *Rev.* VI. 9, 10.

HIS

His Pity to his People remains the same as long as their Bodies lie under the Power of these Destroyers. Even in the midst of all his Glory in the Worlds above, He will never be satisfied till He sees them delivered. Nor will He content himself with Redeeming them only; but he will also go on to Avenge Himself on their implacable Enemies. And as they were inexorably bent on his People's intire Destruction; He will now have no Mercy on them, but extirpate them for ever. This is his unalterable Bent and Purpose, and as soon as ever the FATHER permits Him, He will effectually accomplish it.

AND here we may consider these two things.

1. IN what respect does CHRIST *Ransom* and *Redeem* them, and destroy their Enemies.

2. WHEN and in what Manner will He accomplish this glorious Work.

I. *IN what respect does* CHRIST *Ransom and Redeem his People from the Power of the Grave and Death, and destroy those Enemies.*

Now, *Ransoming*, seems to intimate a sufficient Price laid down for their Redemption; and *Redeeming* signifies the happy Action He performs in consequence of the Ransom paid, and their effectual Deliverance: and these two several Terms seem plainly then to point to those two various Methods whereby He works it for them; (1) By his Sufficient Purchase, and (2) By his Almighty Power. Agreable to this we read of *Ransom* and *Deliverance*, Job XXXIII. 24. *Then He is gracious unto them and saith,* DELIVER *them from going down to the Pit; I have found a* RANSOM. And thus we read of *the* REDEMPTION *of the* PURCHASED *Possession*, Eph. I. 14. There is first the meritorious *Purchase* of this Possession, and then the effectual *Redemption* of it.

1. CHRIST *will meritoriously* RANSOM *them from the Power of the Grave and Death, by the sufficient* Purchase *He has made when He was here on Earth.*

It is for this great End that He *the* ONLY BEGOTTEN SON of THE FATHER became incarnate, that He became a Man, a Servant; that in our humane Nature He yeilded a perfect active Obedience to the Will of GOD; that therein He suffered the Divine Wrath to the utmost, due to his People; and at length gave way to Death, and was led as a Captive into the Grave; tho' He saw no Corruption there. Heb. II. 14, 15. *Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, He also Himself likewise took Part of the same; that thro' Death He might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them who thro' Fear of Death, were all their Life time subject to Bondage.*

A Figure of this we find in the typical Laws of *Moses*, Exod. XXI. 30; where we read of a *Ransom* for the *Life* of a Man, to save him from *Death*: and in Exod. XXX. 12. of a *Ransom* for the *Soul* or Life, to save from the destroying *Plague*. But *the Redemption of the Soul is precious: and no meer Man can by any means Redeem his Brother, nor give to God a Ransom for him; that he should still live for ever and not see Corruption*, Psal. XLIX. 7--9. Nor are they a whit more able to give a Ransom sufficient to Redeem them from Death and the Grave, when they have seen Corruption. For this End therefore our Blessed SAVIOUR appeared in our Nature, obey'd and died: and thus he tells us, Mat. XX. 28. *Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give* HIS LIFE *a* RANSOM *for many.*

AND that this Price is sufficient to ransom his People from the Power of Death & the Grave, is evident from its being of infinite Dignity, and therefore of infinite Value. For it is no less then the infinitely low Condescension, the perfect Obedience, the Labours, the Sufferings, the Life of Him that is GOD, tho' now most amazingly joined to our inferiour Nature: and hence the Apostle observes, Acts XX. 28. *The Church of* GOD *which He has Purchased with his own Blood*

By this Price He has therefore sufficiently Purchased the *Ransom* of his captivated People, their eternal Redemption from Death and the Grave, and the Power of exerting his Vengance on those implacable Enemies

But then

2. *HE will* REDEEM *them effectually, by the infinite* Power *of his Godhead.*

OF this He has given us an illustrious Specimen, when on the third Day after He died, He broke the strong Chains of Death: He conquer'd Him who had the Dominion of it: He baffled the combined Powers of Darkness: they found it utterly impossible to hold him a moment longer: He arose to immortal Life: He broke open the Prison of the Grave: He led Captivity captive: *and having spoiled Principalities and Powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it,* Col. II. 15.

In the midst of Thousands of Chariots and Angels, He ascended to Heaven. He sat down at the Right Hand of the Throne of GOD, far above all Principalities & Powers, and Might & Dominion & every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come. And all things are put under his Feet: and He is the Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the Fullness of Him that filleth all in all, Eph. I. 20,---23.

THERE He entertains the pure and seperate Spirits of deceased Believers in his blisful Presence. And will one Day come & open their Graves, and enliven their Sleeping Dust: and then He'l fashion them into Buildings like his own most glorious Body, by that mighty Power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself, Phil. III. 21.

AND then

3. & lastly, *HAVING thus Redeem'd his People, He will utterly destroy the Power of those Enemies over them.*

DEATH with all it hideous Train shall never more subdue or touch them: Nor shall the Grave consume or swallow them any more for ever. But GOD

shall

shall wipe away all tears from their Eyes: and there shall be no more Death among them, neither sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things shall be passed away, and GOD will make all things new. * Their glorious Life shall be perfected in Immortality, and neither Death nor the Grave shall be ever seen or heard of more.

BUT

II. *WHEN and in what Manner will* CHRIST *accomplish this glorious Work.*

To which I Answer --- At his SECOND COMING, when He shall appear in Flaming Fire in these very Heavens, and come down with all the Angels and Spirits above, to destroy his Enemies and deliver his People.

IN a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, to the great Surprize of the drowzy World, shall the Trumpet Sound, the Voice of the Arch Angel and the Trump of GOD. † The Sun shall be darkned, the Moon shall not give her Light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the Sign of the SON OF MAN in Heaven, and the ungodly Tribes of the Earth shall mourn; for they shall see the SON OF MAN coming in the Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory, *Mat.* XXIV.

MILLIONS of shining Angels will make up his Train. He will descend from Heaven with a mighty Shout. His Glory will inlighten the World, the Fire shall burn before Him, and it shall be very tempestous round about Him. For behold the LORD will come with Fire, and with his Chariots like a Whirlwind, to render his Anger with Fury and his Rebuke with Flames of Fire: and the Hand of the LORD shall be known towards his Servants, and his Indignation towards his Enemies, *Isa.* LXVI. 14, 15.

AND now the Earth shall shake, and the GRAVES fly open & discover their Slain. The Dust of the Righteous shall immediately fly and join and rise into

* Rev. XXI. 4, 5. † 1 Cor. XV. 52. & 1 Thes. IV. 16.

glorious Bodies. They that were ſown in Weakneſs, Corruption & Diſhonour ſhall now be raiſed in Power, Incorruption & Glory: that were ſown mere natural and earthy Bodies, ſhall now be raiſed Spiritual and Heavenly Bodies; that once bare the Image of the Earthly Adam, ſhall now bare the Image of the Heavenly: ‡ and Mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of Life || for ever.

And as the *Dead Saints* ſhall firſt be raiſed incorruptible & immortal; ſo the Saints that ſhall then be found *Alive* on Earth, ſhall be Chang'd immediately, and made incorruptible & immortal like them. And when this corruptible ſhall have put on Incorruption, & this mortal ſhall have put on Immortality; then ſhall be bro't to paſs the ſaying that is written, *Death is ſwallowed up in Victory: O Death where is thy Sting! O Grave where is thy Victory! The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; But Thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. xv. 52, &c.

These are the expreſs Aſſertions of *Divine Revelation*. But why ſhould it be thought impoſſible or difficult either to *Reaſon* or *Nature* that the Dead ſhould be raiſed?

For behold an *Heap* of *vile and filthy Earth*, ſuppoſe the *Mould of ſome dead humane Bodies*, in the early Spring lie bare and void of every Growth — Let but the genial Warmth & Dews come on; how many thouſands of beauteous and living Stalks and Flowers will the moving Duſt ſoon riſe and form into? And how much more would it ſurprize us, were our Eyes but fine and piercing enough to ſee the various Particles of the dirty Maſs, attracting, moving, joining, and in a moſt curious manner ranging themſelves in their proper Places, to form, rear up and perfect ſuch a living Grove of Herbs, as our Saviour tells us, that even *Solomon* in all his Glory was not arrayed like one of theſe. * And tho' they quickly wither, moulder and return to their Duſt again; yet when the

‡ 1 Cor. XV. 42. || 2 Cor. V. 4. * Mat. VI. 29.

fol-

following Spring comes on, the very ſame Materials will again riſe up into a new & living Grove, as beauteous as the other.

Nor does it in the leaſt avail, to ſay, that theſe aroſe from *Seeds* which there lay hid, and now their Roots expanded and drew the Parts which were their proper Nouriſhment. --- For what are *Seeds* but tender Plants already formed by the inviſible Power of God, and infolded in proper Teguments to protect them from outward Injuries? And if you were to ſee their fine Materials running into the curious Form and diſpoſing themſelves along into every Part till they come to conſtitute a perfect living Plant in miniature, compos'd of a vaſt Variety of Coats and Veſſels; would not this be ſtill as wonderous as the other?

And is it not as equal with the Power of God to cauſe this Duſt to run and form into an *humane Body*, as into a curious and beauteous *Vegetable*? And when He has form'd the Body, to inſpire and unite the Soul, as He once has done in another way before? He that orders the Courſe of *Nature* as He pleaſes, can in a moment change the Courſe, and make it every whit as natural for the Bodies of Men to riſe up out of the Duſt as the Stalks of Plants, or as He uſed to form the Bodies of Animals out of earthy Subſtances in their Parents Bodies. And the one will then be as eaſily comprehended, and be no more wonderous or ſupernatural than the other.

In ſhort, The Riſe & Reſurrection of Herbs out of the Mould of Humane Bodies, or of any other; and the conſtant Forming theſe animal Structures out of earthy Subſtances conveyed only thro' their Parents, are lively & continual *Inſtances* of the *Future Reſurrection*. And how eaſy is it to conceive, that in the Morning of that illuſtrious Day, when God will come to create the Earth and theſe lower Heavens anew, that the ſame Almighty Spirit who once formed *Adam* immediately out of the Ground, will then fall upon and in like manner move the Duſt of Believers and raiſe it up into glorious Bodies.

And

And if the *Manner* represented in *Ezekiel*'s Vision, be, as 'tis very likely, the *Symbol* of the *Resurrection*. --The Graves will first be opened: The Dust will then form into the larger and lesser Bones; and then behold a shaking, and the Bones come together, Bone to his Bone, in their several Sockets. Upon this the Sinews and the Flesh are formed on them, and the Skin covers them: and then the Spirit of God breathes the Soul the Breath of Life into them, that the Slain may live: and upon this they rise and stand upon their Feet an exceeding great Army. See *Ezek.* xxxvii. 1, --14.

And when He forms them thus anew, He will leave their *Sin*, and so their *Frailty* and *Mortality* perfectly out of their Frame & Constitutions. In their Formation He will fit their *Bodies* for the pure and perfect Spirits that are to inhabit and rule them. And He will put every Particle of the corporeal Substance under their absolute and mighty Power, which will be enough to render them immortal and impassible, and always full of Beauty, Life and Vigour.

And O! How will the *Raised and Glorious Company* then *Triumph* over the *Grave and Death*; when they shall be thus redeemed from them, and with joyful Eyes shall see those cruel Enemies now vanquished at their Feet and destroyed for ever! The Grave shall no more cover them, nor Death approach them any more. And then "the Ransomed of the "Lord shall return and come to *Zion* with Songs "and everlasting Joy upon their Heads: They shall "obtain Joy & Gladness, and Sorrow & Sighing shall "flee away.

But we must Conclude with a brief

IMPROVEMENT.

And

1. *WHAT dreadful Havock then does* Sin *produce in the World.*

We

We need only look on the *Dying* and on the *Dead*, and open a *Grave*; and we ſhall clearly ſee it in it's dreadful Horrour. Every Funeral and every Grave is a Monument of it.

2. *HOW deeply ſhould this ſerve to humble us in our ſad Subjection to Death, the Grave and vile Corruption.*

Let us but realize that vile and lamentable State, when we ſhall come to be a Prey to thoſe Deſtroyers and to lie down under their prevailing Power; and it is enough to abaſe the proudeſt Mind, whither lifted up with the vain conceit of its preſent Splendor, Strength or Beauty. For how can Pride in theſe indure the trampling Power of Death, or Honour flouriſh in the corrupting Grave?

3. *WHAT a glorious Perſon and Redeemer does* Christ *appear, how highly admired ſhould He be in our Eyes, how gladly welcome to our Hearts, and how exalted with our Praiſes.*

How glorious did He once appear, when in his *own Perſon* He vanquiſhed the Power of the Grave and Death, and led Captivity captive? But O! how much more glorious, when He ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in Flaming Fire --- when He ſhall come to be glorified in *his Saints*, and to be admired in all them that believe, --- in that Day? ‡ Then as the *Prophet* ſpeaks, || He will appear in his glorious Apparel: He'l come travelling on in the Greatneſs of his Strength: He'l ſpeak in Righteouſneſs, and He'l be mighty to Save. He'l tread his Enemies in his Anger: He'l trample them in his Fury: the Day of Vengeance will be in his Heart, and the Year of his Redeemed come: and when He ſees there's none to help them; his own Arm will bring Salvation to Him, and his Fury will uphold Him: and He'l tread down all their Enemies in his Anger, and bring down their Strength to the Earth.

‡ 2 Theſ. I. 7--10. || Iſa. LXIII.

4. *OF what vast Importance is it then that we become* HIS PEOPLE *now, that so we may be the happy Sharers in this great Redemption.*

FOR these alone shall have their part in the *First Resurrection*: and Blessed & Holy are they; for on such the *Second Death* hath no Power, but they shall be Priests of GOD and of CHRIST, and shall reign with Him a Thousand Years. But the rest of the Dead shall lie under the Power of Death and the Grave till the Thousand Years expire: and then the Sea shall give up the Dead which are in it, and Death and the Grave shall deliver up the Dead in them: * and they shall rise indeed, but rise to Shame and everlasting Contempt. † They shall be judged every one according to their Works; and *Death* and the *Grave* i. e. *those who are in them*, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire. And their Worm shall never die, and their Fire shall never be quenched ‡.

5. *WHAT a vast* INCOURAGEMENT *is here for every true Believer in the near Approaches of these destroying Enemies.*

WHAT tho' they look with cruel and relentless Rage; you have a glorious FRIEND that is mightier than they, to Pity and help you, and to crown your Conflict at last with Victory. He will be with you in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, that you may fear no Evil. They are only vile and sinful Bodies that shall be destroyed by them; and this that they may leave their burthensome Corruptions in the Grave behind them, and rise in Glory. And then your solitary Place of Burial shall be glad for you: it shall rejoice & blossom as a Rose: it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with Joy and Singing: You shall see the Glory of the LORD and the Excellency of our GOD.

WHEREFORE strengthen ye the weak Hands and confirm the feeble Knees: Say unto them that are of a feeble Heart, *Be strong, Fear not*: *Behold your* GOD

* Rev. XX. † Dan. XII. 2. ‡ Isa. LVI. 24.

will

will come with Vengeance, even GOD with a Recompence, He will come and ſave you. || He will open your Priſon Doors, and tho' you dwell in the Land of the Shadow of Death, He will cauſe his Light to ſhine upon you: He will reſtore your waſted Subſtance and bring you forth, *O Priſoners of Hope!* into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of GOD.

5. *WHAT a* CONSOLATION *is there for the Bereaved Friends and Relatives of deceas'd Believers in the gloomy Contemplation of the preſent State of their decaying Bodies under the dreadful Power of Death and the Grave.*

WHILE we ſadly mourn to ſee them with their changed Viſage, and to think how they are putrifying and waſting in the Pit of Corruption; how greatly ſhould it comfort and rejoice us to hear theſe words of CHRIST --- *I will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death,* &c. Is not this reviving Voice enough to raiſe our drooping Spirits, and tranſport our Views from their preſent melancholly Scene to their future joyous Reſurrection?

AND has the *Widow* loſt a kind and tender HUSBAND; or have the *Children* loſt a moſt affectionate and lovely FATHER, ever concern'd and active for our Good & Welfare; Let us indeed go down to the Grave after Him, and there behold the lamentable State of *His lifeleſs Body,* with that of our dear *Son and Brother* lying by it,--- That we may the more admire the Power of CHRIST, which is able to change theſe corrupting Bodies, and to form and quicken and make them like his own; to ſhine, as thoſe of the Righteous ſhall, even like the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father.

7. and laſtly, *LET us take care to* IMITATE *the Holy* EXAMPLES *of our believing Relatives that are gone before us.*

|| Iſa. XXXV. 1,--4.

THEIR Love to GOD and CHRIST, their Zeal for his Glory, their humble Reſignation to Him, their Hatred of all Iniquity, their Family Religion and Government, their Readineſs to ſhew Kindneſs to Men; and their Love to their Country, to it's People and Intereſts both civil & ſacred, and the great and noble Deſign of our Fore-fathers hither, for Freedom of Conſcience, for Scriptural Pureneſs of Worſhip, and Sobriety of Manners. In ſuch things as theſe, and in every Virtue and Excellence; Let us, as the *Apoſtle* exhorts us, * be Followers of them who thro' Faith and Patience are gone before us, and we truſt are now in their Souls inheriting the Good of the Promiſes.

IN Fine,

LET the CHILDREN of RELIGIOUS PARENTS ever Remember, the many affectionate Counſels and Warnings given them, the teaching and quickning Examples ſet them, the fervent Prayers that have been made in their Ears, the ſacred Name & Covenant they have been Baptized into, their early Devotion to GOD, and the awful and yet if they are Wiſe the happy Relation wherein they ſtand to the GOD of *their Fathers*.

LET them be exceeding Careful and beware of *Apoſtacy*; leaſt the provoked Spirit of GOD ſhould deſert them, leaſt they become the flagrant Inſtances of his fiery Vengeance, and all their great *Advantages* with their *Parents* themſelves ſhould riſe up hereafter in Judgment againſt them, to confound them and condemn them and aggravate their deſtinguiſhing Puniſhment.

BUT O! Let them chooſe the GOD of *their Fathers* for theirs: Let them openly acknowledge their Covenant, and devote themſelves to his Service: and let them make it their Buſineſs to Praiſe and exalt Him. And how will their *Parents* rejoice among the *Angels* in Heaven, to hear of their Repentance

* Heb. VI. 12.

and

and Faith & Profeſſion of CHRIST, of their frequent Meeting with Him at his Table, and of their agreable Lives on the Earth? But O! How gladly will the ſeparate Souls of ſuch *Parents* & *Children* meet and ſalute among the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect in the Realms above: and with what higher Exults of Pleaſure and Joy will they Riſe out of the Duſt together, and ſhine, and behold each other in the Morning Light of the Appearance of their great REDEEMER?

FOR then thoſe wonderous Words will come to paſs, in Iſa. xxv. 7,---9. with which I cloſe --- *He will deſtroy the Face of the Covering, i.e.* The Clods of the Grave, *caſt over all* his *People and the Vail* of Mortality *ſpread over all Nations. He will* SWALLOW UP DEATH IN VICTORY, *and the* LORD GOD *will wipe away Tears from off all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People ſhall He take away from off all the Earth: For the* LORD *hath ſpoken it. And it ſhall be ſaid in that Day*; "*Lo this is* OUR GOD, "*we have waited for Him, and He will ſave us*; "*This is* THE LORD, *we have waited for Him, we* "*will be* GLAD *and* REJOICE *in* HIS SALVATION.

FINIS.

6 AP 53